

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

OCT 10 2003

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Conyers:

Thank you for your letter concerning the deportation of Rabih Sami Haddad and his family. We apologize for the delay in responding.

We understand the concern that prompted you to write. With respect to the proper clearance procedures of aliens who pose a threat to national security, the Custody Review Unit (CRU) of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) works in tandem with ICE's National Security Unit (NSU) to ensure that the alien is no longer required to remain in the United States for further investigation. Once the NSU responds to the CRU that the alien is no longer needed, the CRU alerts the appropriate ICE field office that the alien is cleared for removal.

ICE houses more than 20,000 detainees in over 450 federal, state and local facilities. Generally, the determination on where to house a detainee is dependent on the available space, not the location of the detainee's residence. Further, details of an individual's removal are almost never discussed in advance with the alien or the alien's family members. This is standard operating procedure to ensure the safety of both the detainee and the officer carrying out the removal. Additionally, when ICE removes an alien from the United States, ICE notifies the Department of State via cable of the alien's removal as well as whether the alien will be accompanied by escorting officers. Upon receipt of the cable, the U.S. Embassy or consulate in the receiving nation, depending on local requirements, may notify local agencies of the arrival. The particulars of an individual case are not discussed with the receiving government, unless there are questions relating to criminality. This information is shared for law enforcement purposes only. It is the decision of the receiving government whether to conduct further investigation of the alien upon his or her arrival into that country.

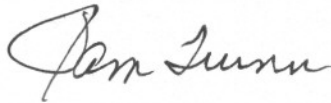
As you know, Mr. Haddad, along with his family, requested asylum. The Immigration Judge denied that application. An appeal was filed with the Board of Immigration Appeals on December 20, 2002, which was subsequently dismissed, on May 19, 2003. The Haddad family has not been split up among three countries as was stated in your correspondence. Mr. Haddad, a citizen of Lebanon, was ordered removed to that country. His removal to Lebanon occurred on July 28, 2003. His three children, who are Lebanese citizens, were ordered removed to that country as well. However, they were instead removed to Kuwait at the request of their mother, Salma Al Rashaid, who is a citizen and national of Kuwait. ICE agreed to purchase a ticket for the child involved who is a U.S. citizen in order that the child could depart with the family if the parents so desired. The family was amenable to this offer. In general, should a family desire that a child who is a U.S. citizen not be returned with the parents, the parents are advised to make arrangements to designate a third party to care for the minor.

Washington, D. C. 20528

We trust this information clarifies the actual circumstances surrounding the removal of Mr. Haddad to Lebanon and subsequent departure of his family to Kuwait. If we may be of further assistance with this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

I appreciate your interest in the Department of Homeland Security, and we look forward to working with you on future homeland security issues. If we may be of further assistance, please contact the Office of Legislative Affairs at (202) 205-4412.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pam Turner".

Pamela J. Turner
Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs